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Approved For Release 2002/05/28 : CIA-RDP91-00682R000300120063-0 THIS SPACE

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

866961

033.1182/9-852
XR 033.1100

FROM : AmConGen, Istanbul, Turkey 155
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. September 8, 1952
REF : Standing instructions; Dept's Circular Airgram 670, July 8, 5:35 PM;
and Cirtel 247, September 3, 1952

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SUBJECT: COIEL Visit on August 19-21, 1952, to Istanbul of Sub-Committee on Escapees and Over-population of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary

4 A. Introductory Note: This report comprises both the administrative and the substantive report of the Sub-Committee's visit to Istanbul. This combination has been chosen because of the extreme brevity of meetings which were had with the Senatorial group. The substantive sections of the report are found on pages 1-3.

B. Composition of the Senatorial Group: The Sub-Committee which visited Istanbul was comprised of Senators Alexander Wiley and Willis Smith and five staff Members: Mr. Richard Arens, Mr. William Arens, Mr. Drury Blair, Mr. Frank W. Schroeder, Mr. William Webster. Mrs. Wiley and Mrs. Smith also accompanied the group.

C. Arrival: The Sub-Committee arrived at Yesilkoy airport on schedule at 19:25 on Tuesday, August 19, 1952. It was met at the airport by Ambassador and Mrs. McGhee, Consul and Mrs. Frank P. Butler (officer in charge ad interim of Consulate General), Consul and Mrs. Donald B. Calder (control officer), Mr. Robert P. Kerwin, Public Affairs Officer and certain other members of the staff.

After a brief press conference (Enclosure No. 1 comprises text of statement made to press), the Senatorial party was transported to the Park Hotel where suites had been reserved for the two Senators and their wives, a double room for Messrs Richard and William Arens, and single rooms for other members of the party. Shortly after their arrival at the Park Hotel, Ambassador and Mrs. McGhee gave an informal dinner there for the visiting Sub-Committee. Consul and Mrs. Butler and Consul and Mrs. Calder were the only additional guests.

D. Substantive Meetings: On Wednesday, August 20, a meeting was convened at 9 A.M. at the Consulate General for a briefing of the Senators by officers of the Consulate General regarding the position of escapees and other refugees in Turkey. This and subsequent meeting with representatives of the local refugee organizations were particularly brief as the Senators showed little interest in the escapee problem in Turkey. This lack of interest was undoubtedly mainly due to the fact that the number of escapees is at its utter maximum, 466. As there is no surplus population in Turkey, there was no discussion of population pressures or problems.

In preparation for the Senatorial visit, a mimeographed document regarding the escapee problem in Turkey and the problem of the ethnic Turks who have emigrated

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from Bulgaria had been prepared. This document contained a great deal of factual information regarding the position here of these two groups of refugees. Ten copies are transmitted under cover of this despatch.

During the discussion with the members of the staff of the Consulate General, the Senators and Sub-Committee staff members posed questions regarding the legal and economic position of the escapee and the ethnic Turk immigrant in Turkey, the possibilities and extent to which escapees have been integrated into the Turkish economy and in particular the extent to which the Turkish Government has been aiding the refugees. It is understood that the Turkish Government does not directly aid escapees in Turkey and when this became clear to the Senators, they were somewhat exercised and demanded to know in particular why the government of the United States had not exerted pressure on the Turkish Government to take over the whole burden of support in a humane and civilized manner and at a reasonable standard of living of these escapees.

At this point, attention of Senators and of their staff was called to the fact that the Turkish Red Crescent Society is aiding escapees; that program of American supplementary aid is the considered policy approved by the President and one directed from Washington. In addition, with regard to a possible reluctance of Turks to aid Bulgarians, the Committee's attention was called to the relative youth of the Turkish Republic, concomitant strong emotions of electorate, and aversion on the part of the Turkish public to certain foreigners, in particular, to Bulgarians.

The answers given to the various Senatorial questions were primarily the same as those set out in the prepared memorandum. All statistics made available to the Senators are the same as those appearing in it. The Senators were informed as to the present priority date, January 1, 1948, established by the President's Escapee Program and likewise informed of the understanding of the Consulate General that this date might be altered as local conditions appeared to warrant.

The Senators, as was to be expected, were particularly interested in the degree of communist penetration in Turkey and infiltration into the escapee group. The replies given to these questions by the Consulate General were substantially as follows:

In our opinion Turkey is a country about as free from Communist participation as it is possible to get. There is great antipathy against Russians and Bulgarians. There are Communists, fellow travellers, parlor pinks, etc., perhaps about 5,000. A Fifth Column is negligible and is not strong enough to constitute a menace to the internal security of Turkey.

What about Communism among escapees? In our experience 95 percent are free of Communist taint; the other 5 percent may be somewhat inclined to or influenced by Communism. What is the reason for 95 percent being anti-Communist? It varies with those who sincerely wanted to escape and get away from Communism down to the lower levels of those who left for personal reasons.

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The Senators were also particularly interested to know whether funds made available under the Kirsten amendment were being expended from Turkey. They were informed by the officer best qualified that this question could not be answered in the field as funds made available do not normally establish the budgetary source from which they come.

The second meeting with Dr. F. Black, President of Robert College, and President of the Refugee Service Committee, and Dr. F. Wilbrandt, the moving spirit of this committee, and Mr. Gazi Han Bessolt, was likewise short. Dr. Black and Dr. Wilbrandt described to the Senators the make up of the various committees aiding the escapees and other refugees in Turkey and gave them information as to the composition of the escapee groups. This information was substantially in accord with the information on the same subject appearing in the prepared memorandum transmitted under cover of this despatch.

The Sub-Committee was then invited to have lunch on board the Consulate General's launch, the Hiawatha, and were transported up the Bosphorus by it as a portion of the journey to the Red Crescent Farm Camp which the Sub-Committee desired to inspect. Automobiles were available at Kucuksu to transport the Sub-Committee to the farm itself. It is believed that the Senatorial group received a very good impression as to the morale and general health and liveliness of the escapees living at this farm camp. The farm camp, since its opening, has improved greatly and there is little question but that the morale of the escapees has also risen.

E. Final Hospitality: On their return, the Senators and staff members were assigned cars for sightseeing. During the morning meeting, Mrs. Wiley and Mrs. Smith were assigned a car for sightseeing. Mrs. [redacted] made a tour of the city accompanied by Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Calder.

On the evening of August 20, the Ambassador gave a dinner at his residence for the Sub-Committee and certain distinguished Turkish politicians and local Turkish citizens connected with the Red Crescent Society. In addition, the leaders of the Refugee Service Committee and the other committees were also invited.

F. Departure: On Thursday, August 21, the senatorial group departed on schedule from Yesilkoy airport for Rome.


G. Newspaper Clippings: In accordance with standing instructions, there are transmitted seven envelopes addressed to the various members of the Sub-Committee group containing press clippings and translations thereof. There is an additional set for the files of the Department.

Enclosures:

For the Consul General

1. Master Sheet: Statement to Press
2. Ten copies "Escapees From Behind Iron Curtain in Turkey"
3. Eight copies press clippings

Copies: Ankara (2), Athens, PEP HICOG


Donald B. Calder
American Consul
Control Officer

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 From Istanbul, Turkey

USIS

Amerikan Haberler Servisi
 132-134 Istiklal Caddesi
 Beyoglu, Istanbul

August 19, 1952

STATEMENT BY SENATOR ALEXANDER WILEY

"The members of this Sub-Committee are very happy to have the opportunity to visit Turkey.

"We are here to study the problems which have arisen from the influx of escapees from behind the Iron Curtain to countries of temporary asylum.

"When we return to Washington, we will make recommendations, based on our studies in 12 European nations, to the United States Senate.

"We regret that our stay here will be short because we would like very much to become better acquainted with the homeland of the valliant Turkish Brigade in Korea."

* * *

Dün akşam, Wisconsin Ayan Üyesi Alexander Wiley ve North Carolina Ayan Üyesi Willis Smith den teşekkül eden Amerika Ayan Meclisinin Adli Tali Komitesi Yegilkköy hava alanına gelince Ayan Üyesi Wiley Istanbul basinına aşağıdaki beyanati vermiştir:

"Bu Tali Komitenin üyeleri Türkiyeyi ziyaret etmek fırsatından dolayı kendilerini gayet bahtiyar addetmektedirler.

Muvakkat melce aramak üzere Demir Perde gerisinden kaç anların akinından husule gelen meseleleri tetkik etmek üzere buraya gelmiş bulunuyoruz.

Washington'a döndüğümüz vakit 12 Avrupa devletinde yapmış olduğumuz tetkikata istinaden Amerika Birleşik Devletleri Ayan Meclisine tavsiyelerde bulunacağız.

Burada kısa bir müddet kalacağımıza teessüf ediyoruz; şükkü, Kore'deki Kahraman Türk Tugayının anavatanını daha iyi tanıması pek çok arzu ederdik."

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